

Considered by some to be the greatest philosopher of the 20th century, Ludwig Wittgenstein played a central, if controversial, role in mid-20th-century analytic philosophy. He continues to influence, and incur debate in, current philosophical thought in topics as diverse as logic and language, perception and intention, ethics and religion, aesthetics and culture, and even political thought. Furthermore, a central factor in investigating Wittgenstein's works is the multifarious nature of the project of interpreting them; this leads to untold difficulties in the ascertainment of his philosophical substance and method.

Originally, there were two commonly recognized stages of Wittgenstein's thought—the early and the later—both of which were taken to be pivotal in their respective periods. In this orthodox two-stage interpretation, it is commonly acknowledged that the early Wittgenstein is epitomized in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. By showing the application of modern logic to metaphysics, via language, he provided new insights into the relations between world, thought, and language and thereby into the nature of philosophy. It is the later Wittgenstein, mostly recognized in the *Philosophical Investigations*, who took the more revolutionary step in critiquing all of traditional philosophy including its climax in his own early work. The nature of his new philosophy is heralded as anti-systematic through and through, yet still conducive to genuine philosophical understanding of traditional problems. In more recent scholarship, this division has been questioned: some interpreters have claimed a certain unity between all stages of his thought, while others talk of a more nuanced division, adding stages such as the middle Wittgenstein and the post-later Wittgenstein.

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1. Biographical Sketch

Wittgenstein was born on April 26, 1889 in Vienna, Austria, to a wealthy industrial family, well-situated in intellectual and cultural Viennese circles. In 1908 he began his studies in aeronautical engineering at Manchester University where his interest in the philosophy of pure mathematics led him to Frege. Upon Frege's advice, in 1911 he went to Cambridge to study with Bertrand Russell. Russell wrote, upon meeting Wittgenstein: "An unknown German appeared ... obstinate and perverse, but I think not stupid" (quoted by Monk 1990: 38f). Within one year, Russell was committed: "I shall certainly encourage him. Perhaps he will do great things ... I love him and feel he will solve the problems I am too old to solve" (quoted by Monk 1990: 41). Russell's insight was accurate. Wittgenstein was idiosyncratic in his habits and way of life, yet profoundly acute in his philosophical sensitivity.

During his years in Cambridge, from 1911 to 1913, Wittgenstein conducted several conversations on philosophy and the foundations of logic with Russell, with whom he had an emotional and intense

relationship, as well as with Moore and Keynes. He retreated to isolation in Norway, for months at a time, in order to ponder these philosophical problems and to work out their solutions. In 1913 he returned to Austria and in 1914, at the start of World War I (1914–1918), joined the Austrian army. He was taken captive in 1918 and spent the remaining months of the war at a prison camp. It was during the war that he wrote the notes and drafts of his first important work, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. After the war the book was published in German and translated into English.

In the 1920s Wittgenstein, now divorced from philosophy (having, to his mind, solved all philosophical problems in the *Tractatus*), gave away his part of his family's fortune and pursued several 'professions' (gardener, teacher, architect, etc.) in and around Vienna. It was only in 1929 that he returned to Cambridge to resume his philosophical vocation, after having been exposed to discussions on the philosophy of mathematics and science with members of the Vienna Circle, whose conception of logical empiricism was indebted to his *Tractatus* account of logic as tautologous, and his philosophy as concerned with logical syntax. During these first years in Cambridge his conception of philosophy and its problems underwent dramatic changes that are recorded in several volumes of conversations, lecture notes, and letters (e.g., *Ludwig Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle*, *The Blue and Brown Books*, *Philosophical Grammar*, *Philosophical Remarks*). Sometimes termed the 'middle Wittgenstein,' this period heralds a rejection of dogmatic philosophy, including both traditional works and the *Tractatus* itself.

In the 1930s and 1940s Wittgenstein conducted seminars at Cambridge, developing most of the ideas that he intended to publish in his second book, *Philosophical Investigations*. These included the turn from formal logic to ordinary language, novel reflections on psychology and mathematics, and a general skepticism concerning philosophy's pretensions. In 1945 he prepared the final manuscript of the *Philosophical Investigations*, but, at the last minute, withdrew it from publication (and only authorized its posthumous publication). For a few more years he continued his philosophical work, but this is marked by a rich development of, rather than a turn away from, his second phase. He traveled during this period to the United States and Ireland, and returned to Cambridge, where he was diagnosed with cancer. Legend has it that, at his death in 1951, his last words were "Tell them I've had a wonderful life" (Monk: 579).

2. The Early Wittgenstein

2.1 *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*

Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus was first published in German in 1921 and then translated—by C.K. Ogden (and F. P. Ramsey)—and published in English in 1922. It was later re-translated by D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness. Coming out of Wittgenstein's *Notes on Logic* (1913), "Notes Dictated to G. E. Moore" (1914), his *Notebooks*, written in 1914–16, and further correspondence with Russell, Moore, and Keynes, and showing Schopenhauerian and other cultural influences, it evolved as a continuation of and reaction to Russell and Frege's conceptions of logic and language. Russell supplied an introduction to the book claiming that it "certainly deserves ... to be considered an important event in the philosophical world." It is fascinating to note that Wittgenstein thought little of Russell's introduction, claiming that it was riddled with misunderstandings. Later interpretations have attempted to unearth the surprising tensions between the introduction and the rest of the book (or between Russell's reading of Wittgenstein and Wittgenstein's own self-assessment)—usually harping on Russell's appropriation of Wittgenstein for his own agenda.

The *Tractatus's* structure purports to be representative of its internal essence. It is constructed around seven basic propositions, numbered by the natural numbers 1–7, with all other paragraphs in the text numbered by decimal expansions so that, e.g., paragraph 1.1 is (supposed to be) a further elaboration on proposition 1, 1.22 is an elaboration of 1.2, and so on.

The seven basic propositions are:

Ogden translation	Pears/McGuinness translation
1. The world is everything that is the case.	The world is all that is the case.
2. What is the case, the fact, is the existence of atomic facts.	What is the case—a fact—is the existence of states of affairs.
3. The logical picture of the facts is the thought.	A logical picture of facts is a thought.
4. The thought is the significant proposition.	A thought is a proposition with sense.
5. Propositions are truth-functions of elementary propositions.	A proposition is a truth-function of elementary propositions.

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| <p>(An elementary proposition is a truth function of itself.)</p> <p>6. The general form of truth-function is $[\neg p, \neg \xi, N(\neg \xi)] [\Diamond^-, \Diamond^-, \Diamond(\Diamond^-)]$.
This is the general form of proposition.</p> <p>7. Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.</p> | <p>(An elementary proposition is a truth function of itself.)</p> <p>The general form of a truth-function is $[\neg p, \neg \xi, N(\neg \xi)] [\Diamond^-, \Diamond^-, \Diamond(\Diamond^-)]$.
This is the general form of a proposition.</p> <p>What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence.</p> |
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Clearly, the book addresses the central problems of philosophy which deal with the world, thought and language, and presents a 'solution' (as Wittgenstein terms it) of these problems that is grounded in logic and in the nature of representation. The world is represented by thought, which is a proposition with sense, since they all—world, thought, and proposition—share the same logical form. Hence, the thought and the proposition can be pictures of the facts.

Starting with a seeming metaphysics, Wittgenstein sees the world as consisting of facts (1), rather than the traditional, atomistic conception of a world made up of objects. Facts are existent states of affairs (2) and states of affairs, in turn, are combinations of objects. "Objects are simple" (*TLF* 2.02) but objects can fit together in various determinate ways. They may have various properties and may hold diverse relations to one another. Objects combine with one another according to their logical, internal properties. That is to say, an object's internal properties determine the possibilities of its combination with other objects; this is its logical form. Thus, states of affairs, being comprised of objects in combination, are inherently complex. The states of affairs which do exist could have been otherwise. This means that states of affairs are either actual (existent) or possible. It is the totality of states of affairs—actual and possible—that makes up the whole of reality. The world is precisely those states of affairs which do exist.

The move to thought, and thereafter to language, is perpetrated with the use of Wittgenstein's famous idea that thoughts, and propositions, are pictures—"the picture is a model of reality" (*TLF* 2.12). Pictures are made up of elements that together constitute the picture. Each element represents an object, and the combination of elements in the picture represents the combination of objects in a state of affairs. The logical structure of the picture, whether in thought or in language, is isomorphic with the logical structure of the state of affairs which it pictures. More subtle is Wittgenstein's insight that the possibility of this structure being shared by the picture (the thought, the proposition) and the state of affairs is the pictorial form. "That is how a picture is attached to reality; it reaches right out to it" (*TLF* 2.1511). This leads to an understanding of what the picture can picture; but also what it cannot—its own pictorial form.

While "the logical picture of the facts is the thought" (3), in the move to language Wittgenstein continues to investigate the possibilities of significance for propositions (4). Logical analysis, in the spirit of Frege and Russell, guides the work, with Wittgenstein using logical calculus to carry out the construction of his system. Explaining that "Only the proposition has sense; only in the context of a proposition has a name meaning" (*TLF* 3.3), he provides the reader with the two conditions for sensical language. First, the structure of the proposition must conform to the constraints of logical form, and second, the elements of the proposition must have reference (*Bedeutung*). These conditions have far-reaching implications. The analysis must culminate with a name being a primitive symbol for a (simple) object. Moreover, logic itself gives us the structure and limits of what can be said at all.

"The general form of a proposition is: This is how things stand" (*TLF* 4.5) and every proposition is either true or false. This bi-polarity of propositions enables the composition of more complex propositions from atomic ones by using truth-functional operators (5). Wittgenstein supplies, in the *Tractatus*, a vivid presentation of Frege's logic in the form of what has become known as 'truth-tables.' This provides the means to go back and analyze all propositions into their atomic parts, since "every statement about complexes can be analyzed into a statement about their constituent parts, and into those propositions which completely describe the complexes" (*TLF* 2.0201). He delves even deeper by then providing the general form of a truth-function (6). This form, $[\neg p, \neg \xi, N(\neg \xi)] [\Diamond^-, \Diamond^-, \Diamond(\Diamond^-)]$, makes use of one formal operation $(N(\neg \xi))(\Diamond(\Diamond^-))$ and one propositional variable $(\neg p)(\Diamond^-)$ to represent Wittgenstein's claim that any proposition "is the result of successive applications" of logical operations to elementary propositions.

Having developed this analysis of world-thought-language, and relying on the one general form of the proposition, Wittgenstein can now assert that all meaningful propositions are of equal value. Subsequently, he ends the journey with the admonition concerning what can (or cannot) and what should (or should not) be said (7), leaving outside the realm of the sayable propositions of ethics, aesthetics, and metaphysics.

2.2 Sense and Nonsense

In the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein's logical construction of a philosophical system has a purpose—to find the limits of world, thought, and language; in other words, to distinguish between sense and nonsense. "The book will ... draw a limit to thinking, or rather—not to thinking, but to the expression of thoughts The limit can ... only be drawn in language and what lies on the other side of the limit will be simply nonsense" (*TLF* Preface). The conditions for a proposition's having sense have been

explored and seen to rest on the possibility of representation or picturing. Names must have a *bedeutung* (reference/meaning), but they can only do so in the context of a proposition which is held together by logical form. It follows that only factual states of affairs which can be pictured can be represented by meaningful propositions. This means that what can be said are only propositions of natural science and leaves out of the realm of sense a daunting number of statements which are made and used in language.

There are, first, the propositions of logic itself. These do not represent states of affairs, and the logical constants do not stand for objects. "My fundamental thought is that the logical constants do not represent. That the *logic* of the facts cannot be represented" (*TLF* 4.0312). This is not a happenstance thought; it is fundamental precisely because the limits of sense rest on logic. Tautologies and contradictions, the propositions of logic, are the limits of language and thought, and thereby the limits of the world. Obviously, then, they do not picture anything and do not, therefore, have sense. They are, in Wittgenstein's terms, senseless (*sinnlos*). Propositions which do have sense are bipolar; they range within the truth-conditions drawn by the truth-tables. But the propositions of logic themselves are "not pictures of the reality ... for the one allows *every* possible state of affairs, the other *none*" (*TLF* 4.462). Indeed, tautologies (and contradictions), being senseless, are recognized as true (or false) "in the symbol alone ... and this fact contains in itself the whole philosophy of logic" (*TLF* 6.113).

The characteristic of being senseless applies not only to the propositions of logic but also to mathematics or the pictorial form itself of the pictures that do represent. These are, like tautologies and contradictions, literally sense-less, they have no sense.

Beyond, or aside from, senseless propositions Wittgenstein identifies another group of statements which cannot carry sense: the nonsensical (*unsinnig*) propositions. Nonsense, as opposed to senselessness, is encountered when a proposition is even more radically devoid of meaning, when it transcends the bounds of sense. Under the label of *unsinnig* can be found various propositions: "Socrates is identical," but also "1 is a number" and "there are objects." While some nonsensical propositions are blatantly so, others seem to be meaningful—and only analysis carried out in accordance with the picture theory can expose their nonsensicality. Since only what is "in" the world can be described, anything that is "outside" is denied meaningfulness, including the notion of limit and the limit points themselves. Traditional metaphysics, and the propositions of ethics and aesthetics, which try to capture the world as a whole, are also excluded, as is the truth in solipsism, the very notion of a subject, for it is also not "in" the world but at its limit.

Wittgenstein does not, however, relegate all that is not inside the bounds of sense to oblivion. He makes a distinction between *saying* and *showing* which is made to do additional crucial work. "What can be shown cannot be said," that is, what cannot be formulated in sayable (sensical) propositions can only be shown. This applies, for example, to the logical form of the world, the pictorial form, etc., which show themselves in the form of (contingent) propositions, in the symbolism, and in logical propositions. Even the unsayable (metaphysical, ethical, aesthetic) propositions of philosophy belong in this group—which Wittgenstein finally describes as "things that cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest. They are what is mystical" (*TLF* 6.522).

2.3 The Nature of Philosophy

Accordingly, "the word 'philosophy' must mean something which stands above or below, but not beside the natural sciences" (*TLF* 4.111). Not surprisingly, then, "most of the propositions and questions to be found in philosophical works are not false but nonsensical" (*TLF* 4.003). Is, then, philosophy doomed to be nonsense (*unsinnig*), or, at best, senseless (*sinnlos*) when it does logic, but, in any case, meaningless? What is left for the philosopher to do, if traditional, or even revolutionary, propositions of metaphysics, epistemology, aesthetics, and ethics cannot be formulated in a sensical manner? The reply to these two questions is found in Wittgenstein's characterization of philosophy: philosophy is not a theory, or a doctrine, but rather an activity. It is an activity of clarification (of thoughts), and more so, of critique (of language). Described by Wittgenstein, it should be the philosopher's routine activity: to react or respond to the traditional philosophers' musings by showing them where they go wrong, using the tools provided by logical analysis. In other words, by showing them that (some of) their propositions are nonsense.

"All propositions are of equal value" (*TLF* 6.4)—that could also be the fundamental thought of the book. For it employs a measure of the value of propositions that is done by logic and the notion of limits. It is here, however, with the constraints on the value of propositions, that the tension in the *Tractatus* is most strongly felt. It becomes clear that the notions used by the *Tractatus*—the logical-philosophical notions—do not belong to the world and hence cannot be used to express anything meaningful. Since language, thought, and the world, are all isomorphic, any attempt to say in logic (i.e., in language) "this and this there is in the world, that there is not" is doomed to be a failure, since it would mean that logic has got outside the limits of the world, i.e. of itself. That is to say, the *Tractatus* has gone over its own limits, and stands in danger of being nonsensical.

The "solution" to this tension is found in Wittgenstein's final remarks, where he uses the metaphor of the ladder to express the function of the *Tractatus*. It is to be used in order to climb on it, in order to "see the world rightly"; but thereafter it must be recognized as nonsense and be thrown away. Hence: "whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent" (7).

2.4 Interpretative Problems

The *Tractatus* is notorious for its interpretative difficulties. In the decades that have passed since its publication it has gone through several waves of general interpretations. Beyond exegetical and hermeneutical issues that revolve around particular sections (such as the world/reality distinction, the difference between representing and presenting, the Frege/Russell connection to Wittgenstein, or the influence on Wittgenstein by existentialist philosophy) there are a few fundamental, not unrelated, disagreements that inform the map of interpretation. These revolve around the realism of the *Tractatus*, the notion of nonsense and its role in reading the *Tractatus* itself, and the reading of the *Tractatus* as an ethical tract.

There are interpretations that see the *Tractatus* as espousing realism, i.e., as positing the independent existence of objects, states of affairs, and facts. That this realism is achieved via a linguistic turn is recognized by all (or most) interpreters, but this linguistic perspective does no damage to the basic realism that is seen to start off the *Tractatus* ("The world is all that is the case") and to run throughout the text ("Objects form the substance of the world" (*TLP* 2.021)). Such realism is also taken to be manifested in the essential bi-polarity of propositions; likewise, a straightforward reading of the picturing relation posits objects there to be represented by signs. As against these readings, more linguistically oriented interpretations give conceptual priority to the symbolism. When "reality is compared with propositions" (*TLP* 4.05), it is the form of propositions which determines the shape of reality (and not the other way round). In any case, the issue of realism (vs. anti-realism) in the *Tractatus* must address the question of the limits of language and the more particular question of what there is (or is not) beyond language. Subsequently, interpreters of the *Tractatus* have moved on to questioning the very presence of metaphysics within the book and the status of the propositions of the book themselves.

'Nonsense' became the hinge of Wittgensteinian interpretative discussion during the last decade of the 20th century. Beyond the bounds of language lies nonsense—propositions which cannot picture *anything*—and Wittgenstein bans traditional metaphysics to that area. The quandary arises concerning the question of what it is that inhabits that realm of nonsense, since Wittgenstein does seem to be saying that there is something there to be shown (rather than said) and does, indeed, characterize it as the 'mystical.' The traditional readings of the *Tractatus* accepted, with varying degrees of discomfort, the existence of that which is unsayable, that which cannot be put into words, the nonsensical. More recent readings tend to take nonsense more seriously as exactly that—nonsense. This also entails taking seriously Wittgenstein's words in 6.54—his famous ladder metaphor—and throwing out the *Tractatus* itself, including the distinction between what can be said and what can only be shown. The *Tractatus*, on this stance, does not point at ineffable truths (of, e.g., metaphysics, ethics, aesthetics, etc.), but should lead us away from such temptations. An accompanying discussion must then also deal with how this can be recognized, what this can possibly mean, and how it should be used, if at all.

This discussion is closely related to what has come to be called the ethical reading of the *Tractatus*. Such a reading is based, first, on the supposed discrepancy between Wittgenstein's construction of a world-language system, which takes up the bulk of the *Tractatus*, and several comments that are made about this construction in the Preface to the book, in its closing remarks, and in a letter he sent to his publisher, Ludwig von Ficker, before publication. In these places, all of which can be viewed as external to the content of the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein preaches silence as regards anything that is of importance, including the 'internal' parts of the book which contain, in his own words, "the final solution of the problems [of philosophy]." It is the importance given to the ineffable that can be viewed as an ethical position. "My work consists of two parts, the one presented here plus all that I have *not* written. And it is precisely this second part that is the important point. For the ethical gets its limit drawn from the inside, as it were, by my book; ... I've managed in my book to put everything firmly into place by being silent about it For now I would recommend you to read the *preface* and the *conclusion*, because they contain the most direct expression of the point" (*ProtoTractatus*, p.16). Obviously, such seemingly contradictory tensions within and about a text—written by its author—give rise to interpretative conundrums.

There is another issue often debated by interpreters of Wittgenstein, which arises out of the questions above. This has to do with the continuity between the thought of the early and later Wittgenstein. Again, the 'standard' interpretations were originally united in perceiving a clear break between the two distinct stages of Wittgenstein's thought, even when ascertaining some developmental continuity between them. And again, the more recent interpretations challenge this standard, emphasizing that the fundamental therapeutic motivation clearly found in the later Wittgenstein should also be attributed to the early.

3. The Later Wittgenstein

3.1 Transition and Critique of *Tractatus*

The idea that philosophy is not a doctrine, and hence should not be approached dogmatically, is one of the most important insights of the *Tractatus*. Yet, as early as 1931, Wittgenstein referred to his own early work as 'dogmatic' ("On Dogmatism" in *VC*, p. 182). Wittgenstein used this term to designate any conception which allows for a gap between question and answer, such that the answer to the question could be found at a later date. The complex edifice of the *Tractatus* is built on the assumption that the task of logical analysis was to discover the elementary propositions, whose form was not yet known. What marks the transition from early to later Wittgenstein can be summed up as the *total* rejection of dogmatism, i.e., as the working out of *all* the consequences of this rejection. The

move from the realm of logic to that of the grammar of ordinary language as the center of the philosopher's attention; from an emphasis on definition and analysis to 'family resemblance' and 'language-games'; and from systematic philosophical writing to an aphoristic style—all have to do with this transition towards anti-dogmatism in its extreme. It is in the *Philosophical Investigations* that the working out of the transitions comes to culmination. Other writings of the same period, though, manifest the same anti-dogmatic stance, as it is applied, e.g., to the philosophy of mathematics or to philosophical psychology.

3.2 Philosophical Investigations

Philosophical Investigations was published posthumously in 1953. It was edited by G. E. M. Anscombe and Rush Rhees and translated by Anscombe. It comprised two parts. Part I, consisting of 693 numbered paragraphs, was ready for printing in 1946, but rescinded from the publisher by Wittgenstein. Part II was added on by the editors, trustees of his *Nachlass*. In 2009 a new edited translation, by P. M. S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte, was published; Part II of the earlier translation, now recognized as an essentially separate entity, was here labeled "Philosophy of Psychology – A Fragment" (*PPF*).

In the Preface to *PI*, Wittgenstein states that his new thoughts would be better understood by contrast with and against the background of his old thoughts, those in the *Tractatus*; and indeed, most of Part I of *PI* is essentially questioning. Its new insights can be understood as primarily exposing fallacies in the traditional way of thinking about language, truth, thought, intentionality, and, perhaps mainly, philosophy. In this sense, it is conceived of as a *therapeutic* work, viewing philosophy itself as *therapy*. (Part II (*PPF*), focusing on philosophical psychology, perception etc., was different, pointing to new perspectives (which, undoubtedly, are not disconnected from the earlier critique) in addressing specific philosophical issues. It is, therefore, more easily read alongside Wittgenstein's other writings of the later period.)

PI begins with a quote from Augustine's *Confessions* which "give us a particular picture of the essence of human language," based on the idea that "the words in language name objects," and that "sentences are combinations of such names" (*PI* 1). This picture of language cannot be relied on as a basis for metaphysical, epistemic or linguistic speculation. Despite its plausibility, this reduction of language to representation cannot do justice to the whole of human language; and even if it is to be considered a picture of only the representative function of human language, it is, as such, a poor picture. Furthermore, this picture of language is at the base of the whole of traditional philosophy, but, for Wittgenstein, it is to be shunned in favor of a new way of looking at both language and philosophy. The *Philosophical Investigations* proceeds to offer the new way of looking at language, which will yield the view of philosophy as therapy.

3.3 Meaning as Use

"For a *large* class of cases of the employment of the word 'meaning'—though not for all—this word can be explained in this way: the meaning of a word is its use in the language" (*PI* 43). This basic statement is what underlies the change of perspective most typical of the later phase of Wittgenstein's thought: a change from a conception of meaning as representation to a view which looks to use as the crux of the investigation. Traditional theories of meaning in the history of philosophy were intent on pointing to something exterior to the proposition which endows it with sense. This 'something' could generally be located either in an objective space, or inside the mind as mental representation. As early as 1933 (*The Blue Book*) Wittgenstein took pains to challenge these conceptions, arriving at the insight that "if we had to name anything which is the life of the sign, we should have to say that it was its *use*" (*BB* 4). Ascertainment of the use (of a word, of a proposition), however, is not given to any sort of constructive theory building, as in the *Tractatus*. Rather, when investigating meaning, the philosopher must "look and see" the variety of uses to which the word is put. An analogy with tools sheds light on the nature of words. When we think of tools in a toolbox, we do not fail to see their variety; but the "functions of words are as diverse as the functions of these objects" (*PI* 11). We are misled by the uniform appearance of our words into theorizing upon meaning: "Especially when we are doing philosophy!" (*PI* 12)

So different is this new perspective that Wittgenstein repeats: "Don't think, but look!" (*PI* 66); and such looking is done *vis a vis* particular cases, not generalizations. In giving the meaning of a word, any explanatory generalization should be replaced by a description of use. The traditional idea that a proposition houses a content and has a restricted number of Fregean forces (such as assertion, question, and command), gives way to an emphasis on the diversity of uses. In order to address the countless multiplicity of uses, their un-fixedness, and their being part of an activity, Wittgenstein introduces the key concept of 'language-game.' He never explicitly defines it since, as opposed to the earlier 'picture,' for instance, this new concept is made to do work for a more fluid, more diversified, and more activity-oriented perspective on language. Hence, indeed, the requirement to define harkens back to an old dogma, which misses the playful and active character of language.

3.4 Language-games and Family Resemblance

Throughout the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein returns, again and again, to the concept of language-games to make clear his lines of thought concerning language. Primitive language-games

are scrutinized for the insights they afford on this or that characteristic of language. Thus, the builders' language-game (*PI* 2), in which a builder and his assistant use exactly four terms (block, pillar, slab, beam), is utilized to illustrate that part of the Augustinian picture of language which might be correct but which is, nevertheless, strictly limited because it ignores the essential role of action in establishing meaning. 'Regular' language-games, such as the astonishing list provided in *PI* 23 (which includes, e.g., reporting an event, speculating about an event, forming and testing a hypothesis, making up a story, reading it, play-acting, singing catches, guessing riddles, making a joke, translating, asking, thanking, and so on), bring out the openness of our possibilities in using language and in describing it.

Language-games are, first, a part of a broader context termed by Wittgenstein a form of life (see below). Secondly, the concept of language-games points at the rule-governed character of language. This does not entail strict and definite systems of rules for each and every language-game, but points to the conventional nature of this sort of human activity. Still, just as we cannot give a final, essential definition of 'game,' so we cannot find "what is common to all these activities and what makes them into language or parts of language" (*PI* 65).

It is here that Wittgenstein's rejection of general explanations, and definitions based on sufficient and necessary conditions, is best pronounced. Instead of these symptoms of the philosopher's "craving for generality," he points to 'family resemblance' as the more suitable analogy for the means of connecting particular uses of the same word. There is no reason to look, as we have done traditionally—and dogmatically—for one, essential core in which the meaning of a word is located and which is, therefore, common to all uses of that word. We should, instead, travel with the word's uses through "a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing" (*PI* 66). Family resemblance also serves to exhibit the lack of boundaries and the distance from exactness that characterize different uses of the same concept. Such boundaries and exactness are the definitive traits of form—be it Platonic form, Aristotelian form, or the general form of a proposition adumbrated in the *Tractatus*. It is from such forms that applications of concepts can be deduced, but this is precisely what Wittgenstein now eschews in favor of appeal to similarity of a kind with family resemblance.

3.5 Rule-following and Private Language

One of the issues most associated with the later Wittgenstein is that of rule-following. Rising out of the considerations above, it becomes another central point of discussion in the question of what it is that can apply to all the uses of a word. The same dogmatic stance as before has it that a rule is an abstract entity—transcending all of its particular applications; knowing the rule involves grasping that abstract entity and thereby knowing how to use it.

Wittgenstein begins his exposition by introducing an example: "... we get [a] pupil to continue a series (say '+ 2') beyond 1000—and he writes 1000, 1004, 1008, 1012" (*PI* 185). What do we do, and what does it mean, when the student, upon being corrected, answers "But I did go on in the same way"? Wittgenstein proceeds (mainly in *PI* 185–243, but also elsewhere) to dismantle the cluster of attendant questions: How do we learn rules? How do we follow them? Wherefrom the standards which decide if a rule is followed correctly? Are they in the mind, along with a mental representation of the rule? Do we appeal to intuition in their application? Are they socially and publicly taught and enforced? In typical Wittgensteinian fashion, the answers are not pursued positively; rather, the very formulation of the questions as legitimate questions with coherent content is put to the test. For indeed, it is both the Platonistic and mentalistic pictures which underlie asking questions of this type, and Wittgenstein is intent on freeing us from these assumptions. Such liberation involves elimination of the need to posit any sort of external or internal authority beyond the actual applications of the rule.

These considerations lead to *PI* 201, often considered the climax of the issue: "This was our paradox: no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be made out to accord with the rule. The answer was: if everything can be made out to accord with the rule, then it can also be made out to conflict with it. And so there would be neither accord nor conflict here." Wittgenstein's formulation of the problem, now at the point of being a "paradox," has given rise to a wealth of interpretation and debate since it is clear to all that this is the crux of the general issue of meaning, and of understanding and using a language. One of the influential readings of the problem of following a rule (introduced by Fogelin 1976 and Kripke 1982) has been the interpretation, according to which Wittgenstein is here voicing a skeptical paradox and offering a skeptical solution. That is to say, there are no facts that determine what counts as following a rule, no real grounds for saying that someone is indeed following a rule, and Wittgenstein accepts this skeptical challenge (by suggesting other conditions that might warrant our asserting that someone is following a rule). This reading has been challenged, in turn, by several interpretations (such as Baker and Hacker 1984, McGinn 1984, and Cavell 1990), while others have provided additional, fresh perspectives (e.g., Diamond, "Rules: Looking in the Right Place" in Phillips and Winch 1989, and several in Miller and Wright 2002).

Directly following the rule-following sections in *PI*, and therefore easily thought to be the upshot of the discussion, are those sections called by interpreters "the private-language argument." Whether it be a veritable argument or not (and Wittgenstein never labeled it as such), these sections point out that for an utterance to be meaningful it must be possible in principle to subject it to public standards and criteria of correctness. For this reason, a private-language, in which "words ... are to refer to what only the speaker can know—to his immediate private sensations ..." (*PI* 243), is not a genuine, meaningful, rule-governed language. The signs in language can only function when there is

a possibility of judging the correctness of their use, “so the use of [a] word stands in need of a justification which everybody understands” (PI 261).

3.6 Grammar and Form of Life

Grammar, usually taken to consist of the rules of correct syntactic and semantic usage, becomes, in Wittgenstein’s hands, the wider—and more elusive—notion which captures the essence of language as a special rule-governed activity. This notion replaces the stricter and purer logic, which played such an essential role in the *Tractatus* in providing a scaffolding for language and the world. Indeed, “*Essence* is expressed in grammar ... Grammar tells what kind of object anything is. (Theology as grammar)” (PI 371, 373). As opposed to grammar-book rules, the “rules” of grammar are not technical instructions from on-high for correct usage and are not idealized as an external system to be conformed to, independently of context. Therefore, they are not appealed to explicitly in any formulation, but are only used in cases of philosophical perplexity to clarify where language misleads us into false illusions. Thus, for example, “I can know what someone else is thinking, not what I am thinking. It is correct to say ‘I know what you are thinking,’ and wrong to say ‘I know what I am thinking.’ (A whole cloud of philosophy condensed into a drop of grammar.)” (*Philosophical Investigations* 1953, p.222). In this example, being sensitive to the grammatical uniqueness of first-person avowals saves us from the blunders of foundational epistemology.

Grammar is hence situated within the regular activity with which language-games are interwoven: “... the word ‘language-*game*’ is used here to emphasize the fact that the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life” (PI 23). What enables language to function and therefore must be accepted as “given” are precisely forms of life. In Wittgenstein’s terms, “It is not only agreement in definitions but also (odd as it may sound) in judgments that is required” (PI 242), and this is “agreement not in opinions, but rather in form of life” (PI 241). Used by Wittgenstein sparingly—five times in the *Investigations*—this concept has given rise to interpretative quandaries and subsequent contradictory readings. Forms of life can be understood as constantly changing and contingent, dependent on culture, context, history, etc.; or as a background common to humankind, “shared human behavior” which is “the system of reference by means of which we interpret an unknown language” (PI 206); or as a notion which can be read differently in different cases – sometimes as relativistic, in other cases as expressing a more universalistic approach.

3.7 The Nature of Philosophy

In his later writings Wittgenstein holds, as he did in the *Tractatus*, that philosophers do not—or should not—supply a theory, neither do they provide explanations. “Philosophy just puts everything before us, and neither explains nor deduces anything.—Since everything lies open to view there is nothing to explain” (PI 126). The anti-theoretical stance is reminiscent of the early Wittgenstein, but there are manifest differences. Although the *Tractatus* precludes philosophical theories, it does construct a systematic edifice which results in the general form of the proposition, all the while relying on strict formal logic; the *Investigations* points out the therapeutic non-dogmatic nature of philosophy, verily instructing philosophers in the ways of therapy. “The work of the philosopher consists in marshalling reminders for a particular purpose” (PI 127). Working with reminders and series of examples, different problems are solved. Unlike the *Tractatus* which advanced one philosophical method, in the *Investigations* “there is not a single philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, different therapies, as it were” (PI 133d). This is directly related to Wittgenstein’s eschewal of *the* logical form or of any a-priori generalization that can be discovered or made in philosophy. Trying to advance such general theses is a temptation which lures philosophers; but the real task of philosophy is both to make us aware of the temptation and to show us how to overcome it. Consequently “a philosophical problem has the form: ‘I don’t know my way about.’” (PI 123), and hence the aim of philosophy is “to show the fly the way out of the fly-bottle” (PI 309).

The refusal of theory goes hand in hand with Wittgenstein’s objection to have “anything hypothetical in our [philosophical] considerations” (PI 109): “All *explanation* must disappear, and description alone must take its place.” In *The Blue Book*, Wittgenstein explained the difficulty encountered by philosophers to work on a minor scale and to take seriously “the particular case” as originating from their “craving for generality.” This craving is strongly influenced by philosophers’ “preoccupation with the method of science,” a reductive and unifying tendency which is “the real source of metaphysics” (BB 18). Wittgenstein’s determined anti-scientism should not be read as an opposition to science in itself; it is the insistence that philosophy and science are to be kept apart – that (contrary to the prevalent attitude of modern civilization) the scientific framework is not appropriate everywhere, and certainly not for philosophical investigations.

The style of the *Investigations* is strikingly different from that of the *Tractatus*. Instead of strictly numbered sections which are organized hierarchically in programmatic order, the *Investigations* fragmentarily voices aphorisms about language-games, family resemblance, forms of life, “sometimes jumping, in a sudden change, from one area to another” (PI Preface). This variation in style is of course essential and is “connected with the very nature of the investigation” (PI Preface). As a matter of fact, Wittgenstein was acutely aware of the contrast between the two stages of his thought, suggesting publication of both texts together in order to make the contrast obvious and clear.

Still, it is precisely via the subject of the nature of philosophy that the fundamental continuity between these two stages, rather than the discrepancy between them, is to be found. In both cases philosophy serves, first, as critique of language. It is through analyzing language’s illusive power that

the philosopher can expose the traps of meaningless philosophical formulations. This means that what was formerly thought of as a philosophical problem may now dissolve “and this simply means that the philosophical problems should *completely* disappear” (PI 133). Two implications of this diagnosis, easily traced back in the *Tractatus*, are to be recognized. One is the inherent dialogical character of philosophy, which is a responsive activity: difficulties and torments are encountered which are then to be dissipated by philosophical therapy. In the *Tractatus*, this took the shape of advice: “The correct method in philosophy would really be the following: to say nothing except what can be said, i.e. propositions of natural science ... and then whenever someone else wanted to say something metaphysical, to demonstrate to him that he had failed to give a meaning to certain signs in his propositions” (TLF 6.53) The second, more far-reaching, “discovery” in the *Investigations* “is the one that enables me to break off philosophizing when I want to” (PI 133). This has been taken to revert back to the ladder metaphor and the injunction to silence in the *Tractatus*.

3.8 Interpretative Problems

Whereas the *Tractatus* has been interpreted in different ways right from its publication, for about two decades since the publication of *Philosophical Investigations* in 1953 there seemed to be wide agreement on the proper way to read the book (along with the vast material from 1930 onwards in Wittgenstein’s *Nachlass*, gradually released over the years). Wittgenstein’s turn from his early emphasis on the role of logical analysis in his philosophical method to the later preference of particular grammatical descriptions was read, quite unanimously, as marking the two clearly distinct – “early” and “later” – phases in his thought. The later phase, it was agreed, consisted mainly of particular descriptions of our ordinary uses of words – especially those words which tend to create the illusion that they represent something profound, words which seem to point at the “essence of language.” “Whereas, in fact, if the words ‘language,’ ‘experience,’ ‘world’ have a use, it must be as humble a one as that of the words ‘table,’ ‘lamp,’ ‘door’.” (PI 97)

With the publication of Stanley Cavell’s *Must We Mean What We Say?* (1969) and especially *The Claim of Reason: Wittgenstein, Skepticism, Morality, and Tragedy* (1979), it turned out that such notions as ‘description,’ ‘ordinary,’ and ‘usage’ are not as innocuous as they had seemed. Cavell’s reading of *Philosophical Investigations* suggested a more radical emphasis on the particularity of contexts and blocked the way to any general description of “grammatical rules.” For Cavell, Wittgenstein’s idea that meanings are determined *only* within language games, i.e., *only* in particular cases, is the key to reading his philosophy. When ignored, we are bound to import an outside requirement into our investigation and thus, favoring a distilled and rigid account of our linguistic exchanges, miss (and misrepresent) their vividness: “As if the meaning were an aura the word brings along with it and retains in every kind of use” (PI 117).

In 1980, Oxford philosophers G.P. Baker and P.M.S. Hacker launched the first volume of an analytical commentary on Wittgenstein’s *Investigations*. This gigantic project, spanning over 4 volumes (the 3rd and 4th written by Hacker alone), advocated and developed the orthodox reading of Wittgenstein’s later work, according to which a systematic mapping – an overview, or *Übersicht* (Cf. PI 122) – of the use of our words is not only possible but also necessary, if we wish to dissolve the philosophical problems arising from the traditional philosophical inattention to ordinary use, due to a prior metaphysical requirement. For Baker and Hacker, a key notion for reading Wittgenstein’s later philosophy is that of philosophical ‘grammar.’ Acute attention to grammatical rules of use offers a way to elucidate meanings and thus to expose philosophical blunders.

Gradually, these alternatives in reading *Philosophical Investigations* came to form two schools of interpretation that are broadly parallel to the ones we encounter regarding Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus*. As noted above (in section 2.4), there is, first, the question of the continuity between Wittgenstein’s earlier and later writings. When emphasis is given – as in the orthodox reading – to Wittgenstein’s switch from logic to grammar, the break between the philosophical stages is easily marked. When, on the contrary, it is the resistance to generalization (of any kind) that is emphasized, then the similarity in Wittgenstein’s therapeutic motivation throughout his life is much more clearly seen.

As in the previous stage, the debate here has to do with the question of ethics and its centrality in reading Wittgenstein’s oeuvre. According to the traditional approach, amplified in Hacker and Baker’s interpretive project, Wittgenstein’s main objective is to resolve or dissolve general philosophical puzzles – concerning, e.g., the mind, the nature of color, perception, and rule-following – by clarifying, arranging, and contrasting different grammatical rules relevant to the notion examined. This is an intellectual investigation and, apart from its being critical of traditional philosophy and its reflection in contemporary science, it has nothing particularly relevant to ethics and should not be read as an ethical endeavor. Readers taking their cue from Cavell, on the other hand, believe that the gist of the Wittgensteinian effort *in toto* is ethical, cultural, or even political. They point at the *Investigations’* motto (“The trouble about progress is that it always looks much greater than it really is” – Nestroy) and Wittgenstein’s mention of “the darkness of this time” in the book’s Preface; but more substantially, they argue that Wittgenstein’s insistence on the ordinary, the practice of every-day living, is ethical through and through. Our lives are saturated by ethics; we are members of a historically and culturally conditioned society; and our linguistic practices cannot but have an important ethical aspect. Ignoring this aspect, according to these interpreters, entails a rejection of what is human in our linguistic exchanges.

To be sure, the interpretations’ map is much more complicated than what is briefly sketched here. There are philosophers who object to the characterization each side in the above debate attaches to the other. There are those who claim that while there is a genuine dispute about the right

interpretation of the *Tractatus*, the various interpreters of *Philosophical Investigations* are much closer to one another than they are ready to acknowledge; and there are independent readings of Wittgenstein which draw their clues from both sides and attempt a different path altogether.

4. The Middle Wittgenstein

It is noteworthy that the conventional conceptualization of two Wittgensteins, originally thought to be clearly demarcated between the early and later Wittgensteins, has been repeatedly re-worked in the ensuing interpretative project of understanding the philosopher's writings, thoughts, and ideas, with no show of subsiding. One of the natural outcomes of such intense investigation is the awareness that, indeed, understanding Wittgenstein means recognizing other times and other developments, such as before the early Wittgenstein (of the *Tractatus*), between the early Wittgenstein and the later Wittgenstein (of *Philosophical Investigations*), and following that later Wittgenstein.

The middle Wittgenstein, he of the period between the early Wittgenstein and the later Wittgenstein, was, early on, identified as worthy of exposure and more interpretative work, but such a venture was clearly a function of two mutually impactful grand questions: What is the relationship between the early and later Wittgenstein (as adumbrated in 2.4 and 3.8) and, following upon answers to that question, what is then the more exact time-frame that is worthy of the independent label "middle"? Thus, there is presently much more work being done on the middle Wittgenstein as the questions of the relationship between the early and the later Wittgenstein have taken center-stage and become a constant in Wittgenstein scholarship.

How, then, to best demarcate the middle Wittgenstein? The wide date recognition, all along from 1929 (or even earlier) to 1944 (the time when Wittgenstein began the final revision of *PI*) might seem too obvious, though it can house readings of the continuity-between-early-and-later-Wittgenstein school persuasively. Such is work by, for instance, Joachim Schulte (1992), who notes a middle Wittgenstein already in the *TLF* leading all the way to later Wittgenstein's key treatments of grammar or mathematics. The opposite extreme, of pinpointing one point in time as expressing a sole significant transformation, seems too summary. This strategy is adopted, for example, by the Hintikkas (1986b) regarding the year 1929 or by Kienzler (1997) concerning a transitional break in 1931. Then there are the various more moderate determinations, which adopt a time-span of a few years, usually sometime between 1929 and 1935, explaining their delineations by philosophical interpretations of the texts and contexts of those times. Such are: O. K. Bouwsma (1961), who points to the period of the *Blue and Brown Books* (1933-35); P. M. S. Hacker (1986), who follows a two year period - 1929-1930 - as the middle Wittgenstein "bridge"; Alois Pichler (2004), who recognizes a middle Wittgenstein in 1930-1935 based on Wittgensteinian styles; or David Stern (1991), who briefly gives the demarcation of "the late 1920s and early 1930s."

If we adopt that last marker of dates, the late 1920s to the early (or mid-)1930s, we can address, in general, the objects of interpretation that have provided the basis for a middle Wittgenstein. Although everything in the *Nachlass* is now digitally available to the aspiring interpreter, the published versions of typescripts/manuscripts of talks and notes (sometimes dictated to students) have been the evidence upon which middle Wittgenstein interpretation has flourished. These are (in chronological order of their occurrence, not their publication) "Some Remarks on Logical Form" (1929), "A Lecture on Ethics" (1929), *Philosophical Remarks* (1929-1930), *Philosophical Grammar* (1932-33), *The Big Typescript* (1932-1933); the *Blue and Brown Books* (1933-1935), and "Notes for Lectures on 'Private Experience' and 'Sense Data'" (1935-36). Just as illuminating, even tantalizing, are the publications of notes taken by participants in Wittgenstein's classes in those philosophically eventful years, since it was in those surroundings that Wittgenstein was working out - live - the deliberations and moves into what would become the later Wittgenstein. Supplied by Alice Ambrose, Desmond Lee, G. E. Moore, Rush Rhees, and Friedrich Waismann (on Wittgenstein's conversations with members of the Vienna Circle), these are volumes replete with questions of philosophy, meta-philosophy, method, and style that provide the Wittgensteinian interpreter with voluminous raw data in order to characterize a middle Wittgenstein.

The themes that populate the texts above are wide and varied. Some harken back to Tractarian refrains, more appear to introduce later Wittgensteinian terms; a number of subjects make transitory appearances, never to return. Phenomenology, for one, is a constant Wittgensteinian concern, mostly for interpreters of all Wittgensteins who bicker over the very ascription of phenomenology to Wittgenstein's thought, accompanied by their attempt to define Wittgenstein's use of the term. But it is in the middle Wittgenstein that phenomenology makes a literal appearance, specifically in the "Phenomenology is Grammar" chapter of *The Big Typescript*. The questions then become whether phenomenology can be ascribed to the early Wittgenstein, whether it was really only adopted in the later Wittgenstein, and most relevant here - whether it can be identified as either vacating the scene in the middle Wittgenstein or, contrarily, there becoming terminologically and therefore significantly present. There is also the option that phenomenology appears exclusively in the middle Wittgenstein. These last options may then be seen as (at least partly) definitive of a middle period.

Mathematics, and Wittgenstein's original thoughts on it, can undoubtedly be seen as another investigative anchor of middle Wittgenstein. Although it is clear that mathematics was of great interest to him in *TLF*, his thoughts on it became more enigmatic precisely in the middle period. Several "isms" are attributed to his view(s) on mathematics here - verificationism, formalism, and finitism, along with recognition of a "calculus conception" of mathematics. (Intuitionism, a favorite label for interpreters of Wittgenstein's mathematics, is only identified in the *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* (1937-1944) and after, i.e., in the later Wittgenstein.) It appears,

however, that middle Wittgenstein's dealings with mathematics in this period are, as claimed by Juliet Floyd (2005), constantly changing – and even that, not in any consistent developmental way but in “piecemeal and uneven” fashion. Indeed, along with written evidence of Wittgenstein's influence on and by mathematicians, we can identify the work on mathematics done particularly by the later Wittgenstein and even he of the post-*Investigations* period, as a substantial overturning of his early *and* middle conceptions of mathematics.

While phenomenology and mathematics stand out as almost quirky (and perhaps suspiciously unclear) subjects making their idiosyncratic appearance in the middle Wittgenstein, the more evident Wittgensteinian constructs of this period are, of course, logic, language, and method. Unsurprisingly, “Some Remarks on Logical Form” in 1929 heralds the transition from early to later Wittgenstein, moving from (ideal, formal) logic to (the rules of use of) grammar. Language is also viewed as the connecting factor between the early and later Wittgenstein, either by discovering still “representational” aspects in descriptions of its use or by deciphering roots of the private language arguments in this Wittgenstein's musings. Other times, analysis of linguistic phenomena as language games rather than tools of logic provides what we have always acknowledged as paradigmatic transitions from early to later Wittgenstein. These all involve methodology – Wittgenstein espousing a method of doing philosophy that is different from that of *TLP*, but still not the plurality of methods proposed in *PI*. Furthermore, the method proposed is the turn to grammar as a back turning on dogmatism (and/of metaphysics). David Stern calls the early Wittgenstein's views on logic, language, and method “logical atomism” and the later Wittgenstein's “practical holism,” tagging the middle Wittgenstein as “logical holism.” Between logical atomism and practical holism seems to lie a drastic divide, but seeing logical holism as bridging the divide gives us the perception – and understanding – of a natural development between them. As spelled out by Mauro Engelmann (2013), this development can then also encompass all the above elements in a comprehensive transition gesturing towards an “anthropological” view.

5. After the *Investigations*

It has been submitted that the writings of the period from 1946 until his death (1951) constitute a distinctive phase of Wittgenstein's thought. These writings include, in addition to the second part of the first edition of the *Philosophical Investigations* (*PPF*), texts edited and collected in volumes such as *Remarks on Colour*, *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, *Zettel*, *On Certainty*, and parts of *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*.

Part II of the *Philosophical Investigations* was, in fact, an item of contention *ab initio*. In Anscombe and Rhees's first edition of 1953 (translated by Anscombe), reasons were given for including it, admittedly as a differentiated part, in the book. In Hacker and Schulte's (translated and edited) fourth edition of 2009, its position was contrarily explained. It now became, instead of Part II, an almost independent entity – *Philosophy of Psychology – A Fragment* (*PPF*). It is also emphasized that it was a “work in progress.” Be that as it may, that installment of a post-*Philosophical Investigations* text exhibits all the vagaries of Wittgensteinian interpretation – behoving philosophers to attend to questions of placement (which Wittgenstein is here represented, middle, later, or other?), affinity (how do these comments relate to Wittgenstein's later work in general?), and topic (what is Wittgenstein dealing with here, psychology, epistemology, or the method of philosophy?).

PPF is the *locus classicus* of a key Wittgensteinian term – “seeing aspects” (*PPF* xi), where “two uses of the word ‘see’” are elaborated. The second use, where one “sees” a likeness in two objects, is the one that has given rise to the question of aspect perception and the attendant phenomena of aspect-dawning and change of aspect. “I observe a face, and then suddenly notice its likeness to another. I see that it has not changed; and yet I see it differently. I call this experience ‘noticing an aspect’” (113). Aspect seeing involves noticing something about an object – an aspect of the object – that one hadn't noticed before and thereby seeing it as something different. Importantly, it also arises as a result of a change of context of our perceptions. This immensely insightful discovery by Wittgenstein, and its successive development, has been the source of a multitude of discussions dealing with questions of objectivity vs. subjectivity, conception vs. perception, and psychology vs. epistemology. It also highlights the move from dogmatic, formalistic universalism to open, humanistic context-laden behavior, aptly reverberating in the to-and-fro of seeing aspects.

On Certainty is generally accepted as a work of epistemology, as opposed to *PPF*, which is usually recognized as dealing with psychology (though even that distinction is called into question by some interpretations). It tackles skeptical doubts and foundational solutions but is, in typical Wittgensteinian fashion, a work of therapy which discounts presuppositions common to both. As always before in the interpretative game, the general view sees Wittgenstein as landing on the non-skeptical side of the epistemological debate, choosing instead to peruse “hinge propositions.” These are propositions about which doubt cannot be entertained, but whether this be due to their being epistemically foundational, naturally certain, or logically unavailable to doubt is still a matter for philosophical explanation; as is the question of Wittgenstein's object of critique – Cartesian or radical skepticism – or, in some quarters, the very assumption of his unequivocal anti-skepticism. This is intimately related to another of *On Certainty*'s themes—the primacy of the deed to the word, or, in Wittgenstein's *PI* terminology, of form of life to logos. Such a clearly delineated philosophical phase has garnered the recognition of a “third Wittgenstein” (initially by Danièle Moyal-Sharrock).

Remarks on Colour is a collection of remarks, composed by Wittgenstein during the last year and a half of his life. In these remarks he attempts to clarify the language we use in describing our

experience and impression of colours, sameness of colours, saturated colours, light and shade, brightness and opaqueness of surfaces, transparency, etc. These reflections present us with a "geometry of colours," though Wittgenstein makes it clear that due to "the indefiniteness in the concept of colour" (III-78) the "logic of colour concepts" (I-22) should be given piecemeal. When we consider colours "there is merely an inability to bring the concepts into some kind of order" (II-20). Philosophical attention should be given rather to such particularities as the blending in of white (as opposed to blending in yellow), "the coloured intermediary between two colours" (III-49), "the difference between black-red-gold and black-red-yellow" (III-51), etc. The investigation is therefore directed not merely to colour phenomena and the language we use to describe them but also to philosophical methodology, in comparison with scientific inquiry, and to what is taken to be conceivable and what is not. It is also unique in reminding us of a hint, by Wittgenstein, that it was prompted by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Zur Farbenlehre* (*On the Theory of Colour*, 1810)!

The general tenor of all the writings of this last period can thence be viewed as, on the one hand, a move away from the critical (some would say destructive) positions of the *Investigations* to a more positive perspective on the same problems that had been facing him since his early writings; on the other hand, this move does not necessarily bespeak a break from the later period but might be more properly viewed as its continuation, in a new light. In other words, the grand question of interpreting Wittgenstein, i.e., the question of continuities or breaks, remains at the forefront of understanding Wittgenstein.